



DIVISION OF
Arts and Sciences

Arts and Sciences Division
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Dear Arts & Sciences Students, Faculty, and Staff:

Hello, I am Jason Stone, the Division Head of Arts & Sciences at OSU-OKC. Let's continue our conversation about your future. I am delighted that you chose to invest in yourself and attend to the next video in our series about the Habits of the Mind. The Habit that we are stressing in this video is thinking flexibly. In this video, we will briefly explore the value of thinking flexibly.

I think that Costa and Kallick do a great job attending to the value of thinking flexibly in their materials at the bottom of the previous page. Remember in our last video, we stressed the importance of listening with empathy. One critical element of producing empathy is flexibility. Empathy involves taking another person's perspective. Once you evaluate a situation and reach a tentative conclusion, then try on the other person's perspective and see if your first evaluation is still accurate. If you did a really good job thinking flexibly and responding to the other person, then you probably have a different opinion of the situation.

The whole reason that we are engaged in this video series is to try to get you engaged with your own mental processes and help you develop better habits. The good news is that your brain is very flexible. Your brain is capable of demonstrating mental flexibility that we didn't even know was possible a decade ago. It takes around 60 days to develop a new habit. So if it does not come easily at first, keep trying to change.

Other than empathy, another great tool that will help you think flexibly is a system of team decision making that comes from the book *Six Thinking Hats*, developed by Edward de Bono.

De Bono indicates that organizations often have problems because everyone is thinking flexibly, but not in concert with one another. De Bono articulates 6 mental postures that can help groups think flexibly and cover all the bases when it comes to important decisions, but also value and facilitate teamwork. The 6 hats are color coded.

- **Information** (White) – What data or information is available, what are the facts?
- **Emotions** (Red) – What are people's feelings or intuitive or instinctive gut reactions or statements of emotional feeling (but not any justification)
- **Discernment** (Black) – What would a hater say about this idea? What would you say about this idea if you were trying to shoot it down? This way of thinking applies logic to identifying reasons to be cautious and conservative
- **Optimistic response** (Yellow) – What are the benefits of the plan? Here logic is applied to identifying benefits, seeking harmony. What would you say if you looked at the idea through only rose colored glasses?



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- **Creativity** (Green) – How would we brainstorm about the idea? How many thoughts about this problem can we identify? Here, ask lots of why questions and try to think outside of the box and see where a thought goes.
- **Control** (Blue) – This is the role of the meeting of the thinking facilitator. The person with the blue hat switches the gears and encourages the group to take new perspectives or go back and wear other hats.

Each of these colors represents a distinctly different and flexible way of processing the problem. That flexibility will help you develop better solutions to complex problems.

Please join me and attend to the other videos in this series. Invest in yourself and your future. Attend to your thinking habits. Your mental habits will determine how far you go. Thank you for your time and attention.

Have a great day and Go Pokes!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jason Stone'.

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